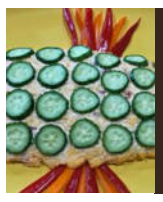
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FOOD & FLAVOR, E-1

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U.S. House votes to impeach President Trump

Contentious vote was divided along party lines

By Daniel Moore
Post-Gazette Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — The U.S. House of Representatives voted on Wednesday to impeach President Donald Trump, setting up a trial in the U.S. Senate to determine whether to remove the country's 45th president from office.

The historic passage of two articles of impeachment drawn up by House Democrats against Mr. Trump, based on charges of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress, was marked by a contentious vote divided sharply along party lines. Virtually all House Democrats voted to impeach, while every Republican opposed the articles.

The first article, which accused Mr. Trump of abusing his office for personal gain, passed by a 230-197 vote. The president now faces trial in the U.S. Senate.

The second article, which accused Mr. Trump of obstructing a congressional investigation by refusing to comply with subpoenas and blocking witnesses from testifying, passed as well, 229-198.

House lawmakers from Pennsylvania were as split as the rest of the country.

The two Democratic congressmen in Western Pennsylvania — Rep. Mike Doyle, D-Forest Hills, and Rep. Conor Lamb, D-Mt. Lebanon — voted for both articles. Every Republican in Pennsylvania voted against them.

Mr. Trump's impeachment capped a 12-week inquiry by House investigators into whether the president improperly used the power of his office to pressure a foreign government to dig up dirt on a political rival.

The inquiry was sparked after a whistleblower report surfaced in September, alleging Mr. Trump used $391 million in military aid from Ukraine and a coveted White House meeting as leverage to exact a public announcement in Ukraine

SEE **IMPEACH**, PAGE A-4

Patrick Semansky/Associated Press

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi of California holds the gavel as House members vote on the second article of impeachment against President Donald Trump on Wednesday on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

School budget passes, but tax increase fails

CFO says district will face $180M hole

By Andrew Goldstein
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The Pittsburgh Public Schools board Wednesday evening approved the district's 2020 general fund budget by a vote of 5-4.

However, the board voted against the proposed 2.3% tax increase that would have funded the budget.

School district solicitor Ira Weiss said that means the 2020 budget would not be funded, and the district would be at risk of shutting down Jan. 1.

"There's no way the district could function without real estate taxes," Mr. Weiss said.

The failure of the tax measure meant that the district would face a $180 million hole in 2020, according to Ronald Joseph, the district's chief financial officer.

After the tax vote failed, board members agreed to suspend the meeting until Dec. 27, when they will try to work out differences and pass a measure that will fund the

SEE **SCHOOLS**, PAGE A-3

Suspect in deaths of firefighters seeking dismissal

His defense claims double jeopardy

By Torsten Ove
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Defense and prosecution squared off again Wednesday to determine if the government should be allowed to try Gregory Brown a second time on charges of setting an East Hills fire 24 years ago that killed three firefighters.

The issue is whether double jeopardy applies in cases where someone is tried in both federal and state courts for the same set of facts.

Mr. Brown was originally convicted in state court in 1997 but five years ago won a new state trial that never happened. Instead, authorities decided to take him to trial in federal court.

His lawyers argue that's a violation of the Fifth Amendment protection against being tried twice for the same crime.

The prosecution says it isn't because the state and federal systems represent different jurisdictions or "sovereigns."

SEE **BROWN**, PAGE A-3

RETURN TO PRAYER

Mukhtar Khan/Associated Press

An elderly Kashmiri Muslim man prays inside Jamia Masjid in Srinagar, Indian-controlled Kashmir, on Wednesday. A call to afternoon prayer has rung out from the central mosque in disputed Kashmir's largest city for the first time in more than four months, ending a virtual ban on religious practice in the Muslim-majority region's biggest mosque. **Story, A-7.**

Heinz Hall to start security screening in January

By Jeremy Reynolds
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra has announced that security screening will begin on patrons at Heinz Hall on Jan. 17.

The security measures include screening equipment currently in use at Lincoln Center in New York City and many other venues. They will apply to PSO concerts and other events at the Downtown venue.

The symphony will implement a "free-flow" system created by Evolv Technology of Boston. Instead of metal detectors and bag checks, Evolv scanners capture images and scan for weapons as ticket holders enter the hall. Heinz Hall will not retain the images, officials said.

Ticket buyers will be able to walk through the new scanners unimpeded, keeping coats and bags on their person. There will not be a bag search, although the symphony reserves the right to check bags as patrons enter the hall as is current policy.

In October 2018, the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust

SEE **HEINZ**, PAGE A-2

Appeals court strikes down 'Obamacare' insurance mandate

Post-Gazette wire services

WASHINGTON — A federal appeals court on Wednesday struck down a central provision of the Affordable Care Act, ruling that the requirement that people have health insurance was unconstitutional.

But the appeals panel — in a ruling that had threatened to strip health protections and insurance coverage from tens of millions of Americans — did not invalidate the rest of the law commonly known as "Obamacare," instead sending the case back to a federal district judge in Texas to "conduct a more searching inquiry" into which of the law's many parts could survive without the mandate.

Congress already has removed the penalty for the insurance requirement as of this year. Still, the 2-1 decision, by a panel of the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans, left the fate of the nearly decade-old health law in limbo even as access to health care has become a central issue in the presidential race. Republicans, for whom a decision to throw out the law heading into the presidential

SEE **MANDATE**, PAGE A-6

Weather
Mostly sunny and breezy; daytime high, 28; tonight's low, 20.
Page D-8

Bridge C-12
Business D-1
Classified D-4
Comics C-11
Crosswords C-12
Editorials A-10
Food E-1
Horoscope C-12
Local News B-1
Lottery B-2
Obituaries B-3
Random Kindness . A-2
Perspectives A-11
Scoreboard C-9
Sports C-1
Sudoku C-12
Television C-10
Weekend Mag ... WE-1

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